

EXHIBIT AAA

IQ SWITCHBACK 900

Polaris Pulls the Trigger on 2005's First Limited Build



tell you the new IQ curves like a Gillette. The variable castor design of its non-parallel wishbones creates a confident, progressive feel on turn-in when the throttle is closed and you're backing into a corner. The plush response to trail hits combines with an almost perfectly linear response to handlebar inputs. This caused some of our testers to declare this the best A-frame suspension in the biz. Hmm?

Our back, Polaris

You can almost feel the tension in the air entering Roseau. There's something going on in America's most prolific powersports vehicle manufacturing town.

Clearly, no one at Polaris was impressed with Ski-Doo achieving number one market share last season. There's a palpable sense of anger, mixed with a dose of fierce Northern Minnesota pride permeating the air at the Polaris factory. Losing number one status after leading snowmobile sales for over 15 years has become more than a small issue in the corporate offices of the big "P". We suspect the battle cry in high level management meetings the past few months has been this: Reclaim number one status.

Up the Ante

Polaris is putting a ton of stock in its new IQ platform. It uses a variable castor, A-frame setup in a new bulkhead featuring one of the sport's most significant innovations, a movable handlebar pole system coined "Rider Select". In the Fusion version the sled gets a bodywork package we're told trail riders prefer. At this writing we haven't met any of those trail riders. For deep snow use the same bulkhead is clothed in a sleek looking aero skin used only on RMK series IQs.

So What Have We Got Here?

Polaris is doing something we thought it might have forgotten: leading. It's been a while since Polaris broke a new segment and this is destined to be a model emulated by the competition.

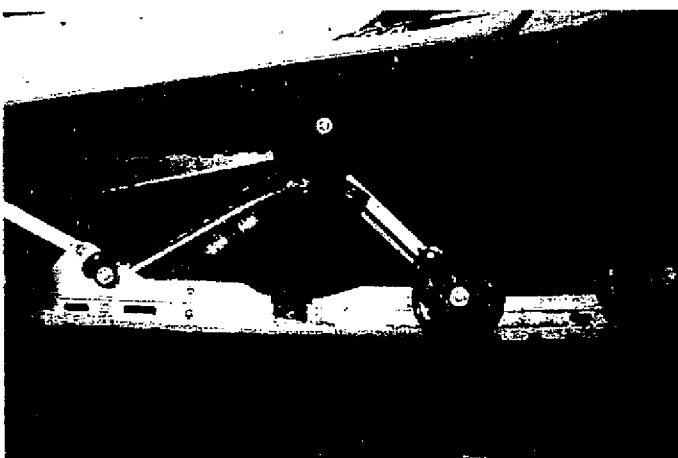
Right now the largest crossover models are 800s. The new IQ Switchback, with its 149 horsepower fuel injected twin, sets a new high water mark for the category.

The Switchback uses the Fusion's wider 42.5 inch front suspension, not the narrowed RMK version. However, the SB does come standard with Polaris mountain skis. The width means the Switchback will handle more like a trail sled - and we're here to

has incorporated a 144 by 1.25 inch lug track with a mildly bent rail. This set-up uses no mechanical coupling and a RydeFX compression adjustable reservoir damper on the rear arm. This skid's performance has been less than impressive on Edge based Switchbacks, however, the Mountain Lite skid - with some detail refinements in the new IQ - is much more supple in bumps. Admittedly we only sampled it on Polaris' wood chip test track but we found the sled was less likely to stand on end under hard acceleration and delivered a nicely damped response to moguls, certainly better than any previous 144-inch Switchback.

Trail Response

The compound bend slide rails are intended to improve response to steering

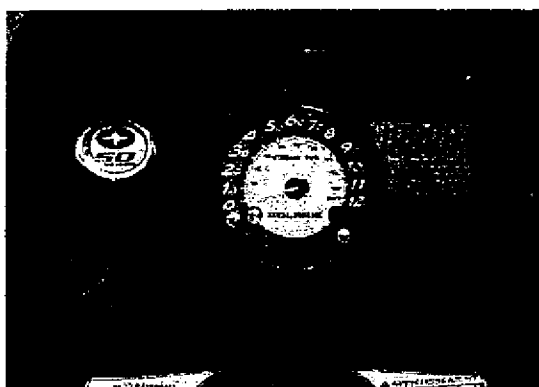


The IQ Switchback's skidframe is a variation of the Mountain Lite design used in RMK models, with a 144 x 1.25 inch track. No coupling with this set-up.

♦ Story & Photos by Mark Lester ♦

inputs and reduce rail friction on hard packed surfaces. In this IQ application we think Polaris has nailed the concept. While steering response on wood chips is less than progressive, we could identify improved response to inputs. Double wide carbides add a measure of bite up front but we strongly suspect the real handling improvement is rooted in the IQ's unusual variable castor geometry. This is a vastly improved crossover package from Polaris and we suspect it will host more engine variants very shortly.

Contributing to the Switchback 900's handling and rider comfort is its Rider Select adjustable handle pole. Every time we use this setup we shake our heads in amazement and wonder why somebody didn't think of it before. The ability to move way forward and weight the front end for tight turns in the woods produces amazing results.



One more nifty feature of the IQ is an all-new instrument package which delivers a plethora of info to the rider. You can even switch the background colors to suit mood swings. (Cough)

The full rearward position allows fat butts and long leggers to stretch out on big mile cruises or, in the case of the SB 900, on long pulls down Kewlar Lake. Once you try this deal you'll be shocked how just one click forward or rearward can initiate a tangible change in handling.

Nine Hundred Cubes

Underhood, the Switchback IQ uses the same 866cc case reed twin we reviewed earlier this season. The new Cleanfire fuel injection system positions the fuel injectors on the back side of the engine's lay-down crankcases; maybe not an ideal location for such parts. With both the intake and exhaust on the front side, the engine compartment is tight and well packaged but not anywhere as roomy as a conventional clamshell hood layout. Truth is, both the Switchback and the REV, with rider forward ergos, demand very tight powerplant packaging. Better get used to it because more like this will be coming - soon.

Power output is very strong, particularly off engagement, with an urgent but easily modulated surge up to 5500 RPM. Beyond this there's no mistaking formidable squeeze is at your call. The sense of power is amplified as the motor heads for full shift RPM. Polaris has been very busy calibrating this mill over the summer and the effort has paid huge dividends for all IQ models.

The Switchback 900 represents the dawn of a new day at Polaris. Although the entire IQ package is a clean sheet for the company, simply building a 900 isn't necessarily big news. The big news is this: Polaris is ready to innovate, ready to break the mold and ready to take chances. Again. ▲

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